(b) and (c) Government did not lodge any spacific protest in this context. However, our Official Spokesman on 17 October, 1993 had stated that Pakistan will doubtlessly orchestrate statements and resolutions on the Hazaratbal issue in every possible forum and that Government of India would treat such propagandistic statements as prazen falsehoods and unacceptable.

Pakistan's attempts to internationalise the Kashmir issue are in violation of the Simla Agreement. Government have and will continue to take firm and necessary measures to apprise the international community of the facts regarding developments in Jammu & Kashmir in correct perspective.

Intimation regarding Haj Subsidy

642. SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL alias MEEM AFZAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the subsidy on Haj is paid in cash to the pilgrims or the Haj Committee: if so, how much amount is required to be paid to each palgrims or the Haj Committee for Haj 1994.

(b) in which manner the subsidy involved in sea travel by the Haj pligrams is calculated;

(c) whether a ship will be made available for the Haj pilgrims to travel by sea, for Haj 1994;

(d) whether Government are still continuing to reimburse to the pilgrims for Haj 1993 the amount representing the differential between the official and the commercial rates of exchange applicable to the release of the foreign exchange to the pilgrims departure for Haj; and

(e) if Government have not yet paid by when this amount is expected to be paid to the 25,000 pilgrims who went for Haj in 1993 under the Haj Committee's arrangements?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) A reasonable fare for pilgrims travelling by sea is decided by Government on the basis of the normal fare structure and taking also into account general financial capacity of the pilgrims and the level of fares fixed in past years. The difference between the fare so fixed and operational and other costs of making a ship available is absorbed by Government and its agencies.

(c) Plans for making a ship available for Haj 1994 are under consideration.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

US consulate advertisements for providing information for stabilsty of that Government

643. DR. ASHOK MITRA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether public advertisements have been issued on behalf of United States consulates offering moretary rewards to Indian citizens for providing information regarding individuals engaged in activities in this country aimed at the overthrow of the U.S. Government;

(b) whether prior permission of Government was taken for placing such advertisement; and

(c) if the answer to (b) be in the affirmative, whether Government have been assured of reciprocal facilities for our intelligence agencies for undertaking similar investigations in the United States of America?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Government are aware of such public advertisements inserted by the US Government in certain publications published from abroad. These advertisements were not country specific.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Pact with Russia for combating terrorism

644. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and Russia have signed a pact on combating terrorism and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs etc.; and

(b) if so, the details of this pact?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI RAJESH PILOT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The salient features of the Agreement are to develop interaction in the field of combating crime against life, freedom, dignity of the person and property and to combat organised and international crime, terrorist activities; to combat illicit operations with weapons, ammunition, explosives, toxic substances and radioactive materials; to combat illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances; to combat manufacture and sale of forged documents, money and securities; to combat crimes connected with economic activities; to combat illicit operations with precious stones and metals; prevention of illegal migration as well as illicit stay of persons and to combat illicit trade etc.

Opening of offices in South Africa

645. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to open foreign offices in South Africa;

(b) if so, whether the terms and conditions have been worked out with the visiting South African team; and

(c) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI SALMAN KHURSHEED): (a) to (c) During the visit to India by South African Foreign Minister, Mr. R. F. Botha, from November 21-22, 1993. India and South Africa signed two protocols, one on the establishment of diplomatic relations and the other on the establishment of consular relations. As a result thereof, it has been decided to upgrade the existing Indian Cultural Centre in Johannesburg, South Africa, into a Consulate General. Plans for offices in Durban and Pretoria are also under consideration. The South African Representative Office in New Delhi is also being upgraded.

Recognition of Sikkim as part of India by China

646. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the question of recognition of Sikkim as part of India by China, was taken up during Prime Minister's recent visit to China in connection with Sino-India border issue; and

(b) if so, what was the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) and (b) The Government of India's position that Sikkim is an integral part of India has been conveyed to the Chinese authorities on several occasions including PM's visit to China. The Chinese authorities are therefore aware of India's position and have noted it.

Nuclear explosion test by China

647. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the nuclear explosion test conducted by China recently; and

(b) if so, what is the reaction of Government with regard thereto?